

KAZAKHSTAN QUARTERLY REPORT

Fourth Quarter – July-September 2001

I. PROGRAMMATIC ACTIVITIES

Civic Education

Democracy Summer Camps in Kokshetau and Aktau

Kokshetau and Aktau Democracy Summer Camps became one of the most significant activities of the fourth quarter for IFES/Kazakhstan. They were a great continuation for civic education activities for many students throughout Kazakhstan. The programs of both camps provided students with experience-based training for Student Action Committees (SACs), an activity that affords students an opportunity to organize and attempt to resolve problems and concerns within their communities.

During the Kokshetau camp at the end of July, students participated in activities, which emulated the processes necessary to successfully establish and sustain SAC activities. In small group seminars, students covered topics such as SAC structure and drafting a SAC charter. Students were also given an opportunity to implement what they had learned through a SAC simulation exercise. Each student group developed a SAC that was charged with addressing the fictitious problem of air pollution caused by a local chemical factory. To make the experience more authentic, trainers, teachers and IFES staff played the roles of representatives of the media, local and international NGOs, and local government officials. The program design proved informative, while also being interactive.

From August 10-19, 2001, IFES conducted a second summer camp, in Aktau, which hosted 51 secondary school students from the western regions of Kazakhstan. As with the summer camp held near Kokshetau, the agenda for the Aktau camp focused on the development of Student Action Committees (SACs), consisting of student groups that are charged with addressing local level community problems. Specifically, the students worked in two SACs to address the issues arising from a situation created by a profitable chemical plant that pollutes the local environment while providing many jobs for the community. During the practice day, the SACs developed plans, budgets and strategies that included working with the chemical plant and an international organization, and informing the community about the problem via TV, Radio and the newspapers. One SAC managed to collect donations from the local community and sent 60 sick children to a sanatorium.

Both Democracy Summer Camps sparked local interest and were covered by media. Irina Kutalins of the Aktau newspaper “Lada TV Plus” visited the Aktau summer camp and interviewed IFES/Kazakhstan Project Manager Bradley Austin, trainer of IFES’ local partner, Association of Young Leaders (AYL), Oleg Bakhmutov and two students. Furthermore, IFES has already seen good evidence of the students’ commitment, as many students with e-mails already contacted IFES with hopes of participating in IFES future programming. IFES/Kazakhstan plans to involve these students as part of the expanding Civic Education program in the 2001 – 2002 school year.

Both IFES Democracy Summer Camps in Kazakhstan provided a great start in civic education for many students. With the lessons from the camps being compiled for future reference, IFES plans to utilize this new experience in the future events in Kazakhstan, the region and anywhere else that wants to conduct similar programs.

Teacher's Trainings

While during the Democracy Summer Camps in Kokshetau and Aktau, IFES used the opportunity to introduce teachers accompanying students to a two-day teacher's training session focused on the IFES civic education course and related Student Action Committee and Student Local Government Day activities. This session introduced IFES' initiatives to teachers who had not previously worked with IFES and also brought them together with teachers who already have experience with IFES' programs. The training provided information on the programs' history, application and future events. To be sure that they fully understand the program, the teachers worked in groups to develop lesson objectives and strategies. As a result, more than 25 teachers, from Astana, Kostanai, Petropavlosk and Oskemen regions and 29 teachers from the Western regions learned about IFES' civic education programming from the IFES staff and the experienced teachers. These new teachers will in turn work with their fellow teachers back in their home regions. This ripple effect should provide the best possible first hand instruction to the teachers/trainers who will pass the information along and comprise the next 'class' of civic education instructors.

At the start of the 2001-2002 IFES-sponsored civic education course in select schools across Kazakhstan in September, IFES also began overseeing their teacher's training sessions. During these sessions, similarly to the summer camp teacher's trainings, teachers and coordinators who have received direct instruction from IFES (at the Democracy Summer Camp or other events) passed the training on to their peers who will also teach the civic education course. As a result, in the month of September, teachers' training sessions took place in Kostanai, Aktau, Uralsk Petropavlovsk, Astana and Talghar, and 174 teachers have already received training on IFES' civic education course-and-textbook program. IFES personnel conducted one session in Talghar at school #8 after the school contacted IFES directly, asking to participate in the program. This school also contacted Kazakh-language schools #2 and #49 in their area so they could receive the training as well. The two additional schools chose to add IFES' program as part of their curriculum, either as an optional course or to augment their current classes.

Additional schools have requested to become a part of the IFES network, either directly or through the Ministry of Education, with whom IFES signed a Protocol of Understanding on implementation of the civic education course earlier in the summer. While many of the original IFES pilot schools were members of the Association of Initiative Schools, most of the newer pilot schools are more mainstream in nature. IFES hopes, with the Ministry, to integrate more and more of the mainstream secondary schools into the program in the coming period. In this manner, IFES will provide as much direct training as possible in support of the course and textbook project. By having the teachers train their fellow colleagues in the regions of the country, these teachers are also readily available for follow-up consultation if necessary. Keeping all the steps for the civic education training and instruction as user-friendly as possible enhances the participants' comprehension and improves the program's sustainability.

Student Local Government Day receives attention

Building on its previous successes, the Student Local Government Day (SLGD) project received attention in various arenas during the fourth quarter. The SLGD program played a role at the summer camp in Kokshetau, as a presentation on the program, its practice, history and applicability was given during the teachers' training. To best facilitate the SLGD taking root in new cities, IFES provided the teachers with the SLGD manuals and will make the program a cornerstone for the new schools civic education work during the coming school year.

In addition, the local Atyrau newspaper, "Prikaspiyskaya Communna", printed a story about the IFES SLGD project in Atyrau, including extracts from some students' essays. This public mention for the program will build further interest in the SLGD and assist in the recognition that students and local government officials deserve for their dedication and hard work. Furthermore, the public notice will attract more attention to IFES' work with this program and facilitate its sustainability.

IFES Continues the Development of Civic Education Training Materials

During the fourth quarter, the Dauir Printing house and IFES worked on the second printing of the first edition of the Civic Education textbook. The work has been primarily focused on editing the texts in Kazakh and Russian, correcting any outstanding typographical inconsistencies, and rendering other minor adjustments. Once the printing of the textbook, scheduled for the middle of October, is completed, IFES will send the books to the remaining pilot schools. The improved textbook will anchor the schools' civic education courses and should remain viable for at least the next three years.

In addition, IFES Project Managers from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan met with IFES Civic Education Consultant Simon Jenkins to best organize and coordinate their common civic education projects. The basis of all textbooks is still the Kazakhstani text, but the individual countries are updating and improving the 'universal' chapters and rewriting the 'country specific' chapters for their situations. For their second edition, IFES/Kazakhstan will update its book with the improved 'universal' chapters while also rewriting and updating the Kazakhstan-specific ones.

IFES has also met its goal of identifying 200 more schools that plan to adopt the civic education optional course for the 2001 – 2002 school year. From the 200 new schools, as many as 8,000 students will participate in this school year's civic education optional course. There are two more cities yet to respond to IFES, and once they provide the names of schools that want to participate in the civic education program, IFES will exceed the targets for this year.

Furthermore, in order to keep the civic education program as current and relevant as possible, IFES is ensuring that the Teachers' Manual is updated according to the recommendations from the teachers who participated in the IFES programs and with the IFES' own lessons learned. Now that the busiest program season has concluded, IFES is applying these recommendations and lessons to improve the Manual. With the impending completion of the exercises and other manuals, IFES is also aiming to make the Teachers' Manual an independent resource that integrates the textbook and other IFES programs.

One of the other programs that the Teachers' Manual will have to utilize is organizing a Student Action Committee (SAC) in their school. IFES featured this program during the Democracy Summer Camps, and some of the students who participated have already initiated a Student Action Committee in their school. To make it easier for others to do the same, IFES has drafted a manual for the program. Once comments from the manual's piloting are received in early October, the manual will be revised accordingly and available for others to use. IFES/Kazakhstan plans to use it as a catalyst to initiate Student Action Committees in schools represented at the Summer Camps and other schools that are interested.

As these materials become available, IFES' abilities to provide instruction and tools to the teachers to execute the civic education course grows in depth, sustainability and comprehension.

II. MATERIALS PRODUCED

1. The Student Action Committee Manual
2. The 2001 Democracy Summer Camps Report
3. Power Point Presentation for the Embassy & USAID on IFES' programs, focusing on the Summer Camps

III. ISSUES AND PROBLEMS

In the course of the fourth quarter, IFES/Kazakhstan had to execute its civic education programming both during the summer vacation and the new 2001-2002 school year. During the summer, IFES activities were extremely popular among students and, while some adjustments had to be made to make the programming culminate in a more logical manner, the summer initiative was a success. However, to accommodate the demands of the new school year, IFES/Kazakhstan programs underwent a shift from external programs, such as summer camps, to the base of the programs, the civic education optional course in schools.

In addition, the start of the new school year prompted the need to add schools to the civic education pilot program and to conduct more teachers' trainings. Most of the education departments already contacted IFES with the lists of new schools for the pilot program, which gives sufficient time to provide necessary training and materials. Some departments were slow to inform IFES and these schools are a little behind with the training and materials, but IFES reached the target of adding 200 more schools this year and may exceed it if some departments contact them soon.

With new schools joining the civic education pilot program, more textbooks are needed. IFES spent the money donated by Exxon-Mobil to print 5000 more textbooks. There is now a difficult process of editing the textbook to improve its content and make it more relevant. This is a region-wide task, so that the work is shared between all Central Asia offices and not repeated. Currently, IFES/Kazakhstan aims to proceed with textbook editing, produce an edited teacher's manual and exercises, and to continue its fund-raising efforts.

ATTACHMENT A:
Evaluation of Progress towards Workplan Benchmarks

Projected benchmarks for 4th Quarter of FY2001	Projected completion date: (According to workplan)	Status:	Comments:
<i>I. Civic Education: Secondary school course development</i>			
Protocol of Understanding signed	March 2001	Completed	PoU was signed by the MoHSSE on June 8, 2001
Textbook revision	July/August 2001	Ongoing	IFES is currently anticipates releasing a third edition of the textbook in January 2002
New teacher training	August 2001	Completed	IFES conducted teacher training seminars in conjunction with the democracy summer camps in August 2001
<i>II. Student Action Committees</i>			
Evaluation	Ongoing	Being undertaken on an ongoing basis	IFES has maintained contact with participants of the summer camps, which focused on SACs, to follow up with SAC activities during the 2001-2002 academic year
<i>III. Summer Democracy Camps</i>			
Selection of students	March 2001	Completed	
Creation of camp agenda	March 2001	Completed	
Conduct of the camps	August 2001	Completed	IFES conducted two summer camps, one in Borovoye (Kokshetau) and a second in

			Aktau, during July/August 2001
<i>IV. Student Local Government Day</i>			
Development of SLGD Manuals	April 2001	Completed	IFES has completed three SLGD manuals, one for teachers, one for students and one for local government officials
SLGD Event	May 2001	Completed	SLGD events were conducted in Atyrau on May 16 and in Pavlodar on May 18
<i>V. Information Resource Development</i>			
Provision of Materials to Resource Centers	Ongoing	Being undertaken on an ongoing basis	